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bad. In all cases, however, it is absolutely necessary that the intelligence should be awakened; and that the student should be taught to think, especially on the reasons for the rules which are given for phrasing and accent. We especially dwell upon this, because we have often met with cases where some of Beethoven's Sonatas have been passed through in a mechanical manner, as a mere task, and afterwards stored up in a conspicuous place, as so many trophies of victory. Indeed, in one instance, we recollect that we heard a young lady estimate these Sonatas according to their money value. She had learned (she said) a two-and-sixpenny one; but her eldest sister had just got a four-shilling one; she was perfectly enchanted with the "Sonata pathétique," because it cost three-and-sixpence.

That musical ignorance is widely spread there can be little doubt; but it must be recollected that with a listener it is passive, and harmless; but with a teacher it is active, and dangerous. The necessity of securing efficient musical instructors, therefore, cannot be too strongly urged upon the public; and if some guarantee of competence were to be in all cases demanded, we are convinced that the result would be beneficial. An examination of the pupils at most large educational establishments is rigorously insisted upon; but if, occasionally, an examination of the masters were to be instituted, there can be little doubt that many instances of apparent incapacity on the part of the learners, might be more justly traced to real incapacity on the part of the teachers.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

A SHORT Autumn season of Italian Opera was opened by Mr. Mapleson on Saturday, the 24th ult. The opera selected was *Lucrezia Borgia*, a work too well known to need a word of comment, especially as the principal characters were sustained by Madlle. Titiens, Madame Trebelli, Mr. Santley, and Signor Mongini. The house was very full; and their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales were present. On the following Monday, Madlle. Minnie Hauck, the young American vocalist, made her *débüt* as *Amina*, in *La Sonnambula*. Her voice is a pure and light soprano, and her execution thoroughly correct and under control. With the audience her success was most decisive; and we need scarcely say that she was compelled to bow her acknowledgments after each act for the unbounded applause with which she was greeted. Signor Mongini sang well throughout the somewhat lackadaisical part of *Elvino*, and Signor Tagliafico ably replaced Mr. Santley (for whom an apology was made on the score of indisposition) in the part of the Count.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

THE Saturday Concerts have, as might be anticipated from the excellent announcement issued at the commencement of the season, proved most attractive. Volkmann's "Fest-Overture," performed at the first Concert, is weak and ineffective; and Wagner's "Meistersinger" March, on the following Saturday, produced little effect. Herr Hager's Concert Aria, and Herr Reinecke's "Prelude to the fifth act of *King Manfred*," however, contain points of much interest; and credit must be given to Mr. Manns for presenting them so carefully to his audience. The third Concert was a treat to all the lovers of Mendelssohn; for the whole of the music at present known as having been composed to Herr Geibel's libretto, *Loreley*, was performed entire, including "A Vintage Song," which was given for the first time. We need scarcely say that this little gem, written solely for male voices, is a model of purity in melody, and of simplicity in construction, the pastoral character being admirably preserved throughout.

It pleased the audience so decisively as to be enthusiastically encored. The "Ave Maria," we have already mentioned, on its performance at one of the Concerts of Mr. Joseph Barnby's Choir. The solo was well sung by Madame Rudersdorff (in spite of her indisposition, which compelled Mr. Grove to claim the indulgence of the audience), and the soprano chorus, supposed to be heard in the distance, was delicately given; although much of the dramatic effect intended by the composer must of course be lost in the concert-room. The *Finale*, which has now fairly become a stock piece, was received with the utmost favour; and to the credit of Madame Rudersdorff, it must be said that, even under such adverse circumstances, she exerted herself to the utmost in the brilliant soprano solo. Mendelssohn's Overture to *Melusine*, was played before the *Loreley* selection, and proved most effective and appropriate. Mr. Sullivan's part song, "Echoes," performed for the first time, was scarcely done justice to by the choir; but enough of its merit was developed to make us long for a second hearing.

AGRICULTURAL HALL.

THE Concerts at this establishment have been crowded during the past month. Classical nights have been sparingly introduced, when the *Messiah*, *Elijah*, the *Creation*, &c., have delighted the few, at the expense of the many. As a rule, however, the programmes have been strangely mixed—containing music of a good school, of a bad school, and of no school at all—founded, we presume, upon the experience of what is most attractive to a general audience. We are willing to admit that, as monetary success is the most important result of these Concerts, much concession to popular taste may be necessary; but we regret to see the old Jullien time revived, because we believed (and still believe) that the taste for such a class of entertainment has passed away. The Quadrille, called "The Fall of Magdala," with "military effects" makes us tremble to think what may be the next step in this direction; especially as the martial spirit has been appealed to by admitting volunteers in uniform at half price. May not a "Quadrille," descriptive of the celebrated Riot in Hyde Park, be prepared, with grand "police effects," admitting, of course, members of the "force" at a reduced rate? As the "Magdala" Quadrille has been dedicated to Lord Napier, the "Hyde Park" Quadrille should be dedicated to Sir Richard Mayne.

A Concert was given in the Lower Hall, Exeter Hall, on Monday evening, the 26th ult., by the Choir of St. Michael's Church, Burleigh Street, assisted by Miss Poole, Miss Marie Leaford, Miss Kate Bartlett, Miss Emily Thomson (piano), Mr. Wilbye Cooper, and Mr. H. Dimmock Hill (clarinet). Miss Poole sang, "Speak, for thy servant heareth" (W. H. Weiss), and "My soul is dark" (T. Davenport Chatterton), the latter being accompanied on the harp by Mr. J. Balsir Chatterton. Miss Marie Leaford gave "Angels, ever bright and fair," and a song by West, "Sweet Bird." Miss Kate Bartlett, though suffering from nervousness, sang the two songs allotted to her—"Come unto Him" (*Messiah*), and "Penelope at her task,"—with considerable effect. Mr. Wilbye Cooper gave "If with all your hearts" (Mendelssohn), and "The long waves come and go" (Gabriel), with his usual ability. Miss Emily Thomson played Beethoven's Sonata in A flat, with Funeral March. The Choir performed several choruses and part-songs very creditably. Mr. J. Turle Lee accompanied, and Mr. Edward Craig conducted. The Concert was given in aid of the Church Organ Fund.

On Friday, the 9th ult., the remains of the Rev. Ernest Hawkins were interred in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, when the choir, under the able direction of Mr. Turle, sang the appointed portions of the service; and Goss's anthem, "Brother, thou art gone before us," to Dean Milman's words, was performed.